REMARKS

The foregoing Amendment and the following Remarks are submitted in response to the Office Action issued on April 19, 2006 in connection with the above-identified patent application, and are being filed within the three-month shortened statutory period set for a response by the Office Action.

Claims 1, 8-23, and 25 remain pending in the present application. Independent claim 1 has been amended to include substantially all of the subject matter of claims 2-7, and independent claim 23 has been similarly amended. In addition, the specification has been amended to update the Cross-Reference to Related Application section. Applicants submit that no new matter has been added to the application by the Amendment.

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of the claims consistent with the following remarks.

Preliminarily, the Examiner has objected to the specification for the reason that the Cross-Reference to Related Application section requires updating to reflect the issuance of an application. Accordingly, Applicants have so amended the specification.

The Examiner has rejected the claims under 35 USC § 102 as being anticipated by Wu (U.S. Patent No. 6,959,339). Applicants respectfully traverse the § 102 rejection.

Independent claim 1 as amended recites a help architecture in support of an application and a help engine operating on a computer, where the help engine locates help topics relevant to the application. The help architecture includes a plurality of help libraries and a central store. Each help library stores a plurality of help topics therein, where the help

topics are accessible to a user from the help libraries by way of the computer. The central store stores a plurality of pieces of topic metadata, where each piece of topic metadata corresponds to one of the help topics accessible from the help libraries.

In response to a search request from the help engine, the central store locates topic metadata relevant to the search request and returns information from the located topic metadata. In particular, the search request includes search keywords, each piece of topic metadata in the central store includes a set of keywords by which the help topic can be searched for and a set of attributes by which the help topic can be filtered, and the central store returns to the requesting help engine information from located pieces of topic metadata containing the search keywords.

The returned information corresponds to each located piece of topic metadata and includes a summary of the corresponding help topic, a set of attributes relating to the corresponding help topic, and an address by which the corresponding help topic may be located in the corresponding help library. Thus, the help engine filters each located piece of topic metadata based on the set of attributes thereof and displays information relating to each filtered piece of topic metadata to the user. The displayed information for each piece of topic metadata includes the summary of the corresponding help topic and the address by which the corresponding help topic may be located in the corresponding help library. Accordingly, the user may review the displayed summary of each help topic and if desired based thereon access the corresponding help topic from the corresponding help library based on the corresponding address.

Independent claim 23 recites subject matter similar to that of claim 1, albeit in the form of a method.

In the present invention, then, a central store is employed to identify relevant help topics at a plurality of libraries by way of having topic metadata relating to each help topic. As a result, a search for a user may be conducted at one central store even though the search is conducted over help topics available from a plurality of libraries that are distinct from the central store. Thus, by separating the search function from the libraries, a single search may be conducted over many libraries, and correspondingly the user need not perform the search at each individual library.

Also in the present invention, the search is conducted based both on keywords and attributes. In particular, each piece of topic metadata includes keywords that are employed during the requested search at the central store, and also includes attributes that the help engine may employ to filter received search results. As may be appreciated, filtering may be performed on any appropriate basis. For example, the help engine may filter according to a context of the application. Thus, if the application was being employed to perform a particular action at the time the search was requested, then the filtering may be performed to highlight help topics that relate to the particular action.

The Wu reference discloses a system for image format handling. Particularly with regard to the present invention, the Wu reference discloses at column 7 et seq. a digital library with integrated multi-search capabilities, including the capability to search images by image-related information. Notably, though, the Wu library is not a plurality of help libraries and a central store, as is required by the claims. Also, the Wu reference does not disclose that any such library is one of a plurality of libraries that has a plurality of help topics, as is required by the claims, or that any such central store stores a plurality of pieces of topic

metadata, where each piece of topic metadata corresponds to one of the help topics accessible

from the help libraries, as is also require by the claims.

Notably, the Wu reference does not disclose or even appreciate that in

response to a search request that includes search keywords, each piece of topic metadata in

such a central store includes a set of keywords by which the help topic can be searched for,

and also a set of attributes by which the help topic can be filtered, as is required by the

claims. Thus, the Wu reference does not at all disclose that the central store returns to the

requesting help engine information from located pieces of topic metadata containing the

search keywords.

To continue, the Wu reference further does not disclose that the returned

information corresponds to each located piece of topic metadata and includes a summary of

the corresponding help topic, a set of attributes relating to the corresponding help topic, and

an address by which the corresponding help topic may be located in the corresponding help

library, as is required by the claims. Thus, and particularly, the Wu reference does not

disclose or even suggest that the help engine should or could filter each located piece of topic

metadata based on the set of attributes thereof, and thereafter display information relating to

each filtered piece of topic metadata to the user, as is required by the claims.

To summarize, then, while the Wu reference discloses a digital library that

may be searched, the Wu reference does not at all disclose that such a digital library is one of

a plurality of such libraries that are in effect marshaled by a central store so that a search for a

user may be conducted at one central store even though the search is conducted over help

topics available from a plurality of libraries that are distinct from the central store, as is

required by the claims of the present application. Thus, the Wu reference does not disclose or

even appreciate that by separating the search function from the libraries, a single search may be conducted over many libraries, and correspondingly the user need not perform the search at each individual library.

Also, the Wu reference does not at all appreciate that a search should or could be conducted based both on keywords and attributes, as is required by the claims of the present application. Thus, the Wu reference does not disclose that each help topic at each library should or could be represented at the central store by a corresponding piece of topic metadata that includes keywords that are employed during the requested search at the central store, and that also includes attributes that the help engine may employ to filter received search results.
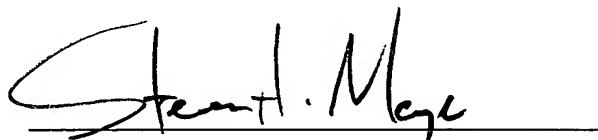
Thus, for all of the aforementioned reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that the Wu reference cannot be applied to anticipate the subject matter recited in claims 1 and 23, or any claims depending therefrom, as amended. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the section 102 rejection.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that the present

application including claims 1, 8-23, and 25 is in condition for allowance, and such action is

respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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